

cess had attended this movement the purpose of the brigade commander was to place his troops on the train, run into the town and surprise the garrison. Pickett's expedition, however, was not successful, and the troops fell back to Kinston, remaining there a few weeks, and then marched on Plymouth.

The Battle of Plymouth.—April 18, 19 and 20, 1864: General Hoke, who succeeded to the command of all the forces in this department, directed the campaign, and was also authorized by the Navy Department to secure the co-operation of the Confederate ram, *Albemarle*, then near Hamilton on the Roanoke river, in an unfinished state and in charge of Commander Cooke. Colonel Mercer, of the 21st Georgia, commanded Hoke's Brigade. He was killed in a charge at night upon a fort about half a mile in advance of the enemy's line of works at Plymouth, and Lewis, of the 43d, assumed command and was subsequently promoted to Brigadier-General. The fort was taken and the *Albemarle* simultaneously steamed down the river and engaged the enemy, sinking one of their gunboats and driving their flotilla a considerable distance below Plymouth, thus relieving the land forces in future movements of the apprehended attack from them. During the night the different commands were placed in position for the general assault upon the works around the town, and this necessitated the moving of the troops by circuitous routes to avoid being discovered by the enemy, and consumed all of the 19th. Accordingly, on the morning of the 20th General Matt. Ransom attacked on the south side of the town, Lewis on the north, and Hoke, with the other

brigades, moved upon the enemy's center. The town was taken in a short while, the garrison and an immense amount of supplies being captured. The brilliancy and dash of this movement, which was planned and faithfully executed according to the directions of the commanding officer, received recognition in the following:

Resolved by the Congress of the Confederate States of America, That the thanks of Congress and the country are due and are tendered to Major-General Robert F. Hoke and Commander James W. Cooke, and the officers and men under their command, for the brilliant victory over the enemy at Plymouth, N. C.

Joint resolution, approved May 17, 1864. War Records, Series I., Vol. XXXIII., page 305.

Washington, N. C., was next threatened, and after an artillery duel during the day the enemy evacuated it. The forces then moved upon Newbern again. The 43d engaged the enemy about nine miles from the city during the afternoon of May 2, and again on the morning of the next day. The enemy were forced back in a running fight within sight of the town. At this juncture, when the capture of the town seemed probable, orders were received to march immediately back to Kinston and thence to Petersburg, which point General Butler, of the Union army, was threatening with a large force. The distance covered by the regiment on this day's march, including the running fight towards Newbern and the return to Kinston, was thirty-seven miles in about twelve hours. Of the reinforcements ordered to Petersburg the 43d was the first regiment to arrive, and, there being but few other troops on the ground, orders were given to occupy the en-